

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Case No. MD-11-0339A

ORDER FOR PRACTICE RESTRICTION AND CONSENT TO THE SAME

Holder of License No. 15912
For the Practice of Allopathic Medicine
In the State of Arizona.

FINDINGS OF FACT

4. On December 17, 2008, JP presented to Respondent. The provided medical records begin on this date, with a brief history and procedure note describing Respondent's attempted performance of a cervical epidural steroid injection. There is no indication in the medical record of any medical evaluation being performed prior to this date. The procedure was performed without the use of fluoroscopy, with JP in the sitting position, and with the use of the "hanging drop" technique.

1 5. JP received 160mg of Propofol, a general anesthetic, for sedation during the
2 procedure. Immediately following the procedure, JP was unable to move her right leg, had
3 weakness in her right arm, was flexing her right leg, and was experiencing tingling in her
4 left arm. She also experienced increased pain. JP received emergent care for a presumed
5 spinal cord injury and was transferred to the hospital. No medical records beyond this time
6 were provided. Respondent wrote a letter to the Board stating that JP has not fully
7 recovered from this incident.

8 6. The standard of care when administering sedation for the performance of
9 cervical epidural steroid injections requires a physician to do so judiciously and in a
10 manner consistent with conscious sedation.

11 7. Dr. Sara deviated from the standard of care by administering Propofol, a
12 general anesthetic agent, for sedation during the performance of a cervical epidural steroid
13 injection.

14 8. The standard of care requires a physician to perform a complete history and
15 physical examination, a diagnostic work up, and obtain imaging studies prior to the
16 performance of cervical epidural steroid injection.

17 9. Dr. Sara deviated from the standard of care by failing to document having
18 obtained a history, performed a physical examination, obtained imaging studies, and
19 determined a diagnosis and treatment plan prior to the performance of cervical epidural
20 steroid injection.

21 10. The standard of care requires a physician to use intra-procedure fluoroscopic
22 imaging during the performance of cervical epidural steroid injection.

23 11. Dr. Sara deviated from the standard of care by performing a cervical epidural
24 steroid injection without the use of fluoroscopy.

12. JP experienced sudden onset loss of motor control of her right lower extremity, weakness and tingling in her right upper extremity, and increased pain. The records provided do not include the ultimate diagnosis and outcome, although a cervical spine MRI following the procedure did not reveal a specific spinal cord injury.

13. Under these circumstances, JP could have become a quadriplegic, or might have died. Less severe, but permanent neural injury may also have occurred.

14. While Dr. Sara does not agree with many of the Board's conclusions, he states that on May 15, 2011, he ceased providing non-operative pain management, including cervical epidural injections, altogether and limited his practice to administering general and local anesthesia in the operative setting.

15. Given Dr. Sara's voluntary change in practice, effective May 15, 2011, he does not have any objection to the practice restriction set forth in this consent agreement.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Board possesses jurisdiction over the subject matter hereof and over Respondent.

2. The conduct and circumstances described above constitute unprofessional conduct pursuant to A.R.S. § 32-1401(27)(q) ("[a]ny conduct or practice that is or might be harmful or dangerous to the health of the patient or the public.").

3. If the Board finds that it can take rehabilitative or disciplinary action without the presence of the doctor at a formal interview it may enter into a consent agreement with the doctor to limit or restrict the doctor's practice or to rehabilitate the doctor in order to protect the public and ensure the doctor's ability to safely engage in the practice of medicine. A.R.S. § 32-1451(F).

4. The Board finds that a practice restriction is needed in order to protect the public.

1 ORDER

2 IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

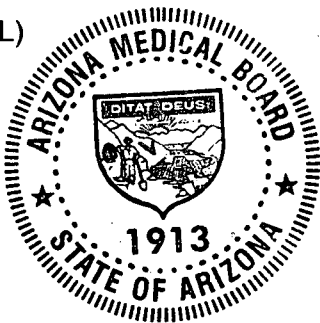
3 1. For a period of 15 years, Respondent's practice is restricted as follows:

4 (a) Respondent shall not practice interventional or pharmacologic pain
5 management;

6 (b) Notwithstanding the restriction in paragraph (a), Respondent may perform
7 the following procedures for operative patients only: administration of
8 general anesthesia, interscalene injections for shoulder surgeries,
9 femoral nerve injections for anterior cruciate ligament or total knee
10 surgeries, peribulbar injections for ocular cataract surgeries, axillary
11 brachial plexus injection for arm surgeries, lumbar subarachnoid
12 injections for lower body surgeries where a contraindication for general
13 anesthesia exists, or ankle blocks or field injections for foot surgeries.

14 DATED AND EFFECTIVE this 14th day of December, 2011.

15
16 (SEAL)



16 ARIZONA MEDICAL BOARD

17
18 By [Signature]

19 Lisa S. Wynn
20 Executive Director

21 CONSENT TO ENTRY OF ORDER

22 1. Respondent has read and understands this Consent Agreement and the
23 stipulated Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Order ("Order"). Respondent
24 acknowledges he has the right to consult with legal counsel regarding this matter.
25

1 2. Respondent acknowledges and agrees that this Order is entered into freely
2 and voluntarily and that no promise was made or coercion used to induce such entry.

3 3. By consenting to this Order, Respondent voluntarily relinquishes any rights to
4 a hearing or judicial review in state or federal court on the matters alleged, or to challenge
5 this Order in its entirety as issued by the Board, and waives any other cause of action
6 related thereto or arising from said Order.

7 4. The Order is not effective until approved by the Board and signed by its
8 Executive Director.

9 5. All admissions made by Respondent are solely for final disposition of this
10 matter and any subsequent related administrative proceedings or civil litigation involving
11 the Board and Respondent. Therefore, said admissions by Respondent are not intended
12 or made for any other use, such as in the context of another state or federal government
13 regulatory agency proceeding, civil or criminal court proceeding, in the State of Arizona or
14 any other state or federal court.

15 6. Upon signing this agreement, and returning this document (or a copy thereof)
16 to the Board's Executive Director, Respondent may not revoke the consent to the entry of
17 the Order. Respondent may not make any modifications to the document. Any
18 modifications to this original document are ineffective and void unless mutually approved
19 by the parties.


20 7. This Order is a public record that will be publicly disseminated as a formal
21 disciplinary action of the Board and will be reported to the National Practitioner's Data
22 Bank and on the Board's web site as a disciplinary action.

23 8. If any part of the Order is later declared void or otherwise unenforceable, the
24 remainder of the Order in its entirety shall remain in force and effect.

1 9. If the Board does not adopt this Order, Respondent will not assert as a
2 defense that the Board's consideration of the Order constitutes bias, prejudice,
3 prejudgment or other similar defense.

4 10. Any violation of this Order constitutes unprofessional conduct and may result
5 in disciplinary action. A.R.S. § § 32-1401(27)(r) ("[v]iolating a formal order, probation,
6 consent agreement or stipulation issued or entered into by the board or its executive
7 director under this chapter") and 32-1451.

8 11. ***Respondent has read and understands the conditions of the restriction.***

9
10 
11 _____
George S. Sara, M.D.

DATED: 10.28.11

12
13 EXECUTED COPY of the foregoing mailed
this 14th day of December, 2011 to:

14 R. Douglas Dalton
15 Osborn Maledon
16 The Phoenix Plaza
17 2929 N. Central Avenue, 21st Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85012-2793
Attorney for Respondent

18
19 ORIGINAL of the foregoing filed
this 14th day of December, 2011 with:

20 Arizona Medical Board
21 9545 E. Doubletree Ranch Road
22 Scottsdale, AZ 85258

23 
Arizona Medical Board Staff